

Good afternoon Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Margaret Stover, and I am here to express concerns about Proposed Senate Bill 666, An Act Concerning Safe Residential Treatment Facilities For Effective Recovery.

I would describe my recovery as upside down triangle with inpatient care being at the top- sober housing in the middle- and then home at the bottom!

Inpatient care is a place where there was 24 hour a day supervision with a strong safety net.

Sober housing provides me with structure and support.

Home is the last of the recovery equation because without the other two, inpatient care and sober housing Home is incomplete for me.

If I had to go right back home after completing by inpatient care, I know for me, would most likely result in a relapse because I would be alone. There is no one there who completely understands this disease, because it is a disease, and a very powerful one- but it can be arrested one day at a time and with the help of others who understand. Our families try- but do not understand completely.

Just because I have changed doesn't mean the world has. Being sober for 30 days in a completely structured environment is needed for me- I need sober housing as a stepping-stone. I want to become a successful productive member of my community and I am confident that I will. We do recover.

At first I wasn't interested in going to a sober house, but it was the best decision I could have made- I feel I will succeed with the help of my house manager and my peers.

Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee on this extremely important issue. Please do not put in place a statute that may well jeopardize access to housing for persons who are striving to recover their lives and become productive members of society. Please consider working with DMHAS and the recovery community to accommodate community needs.